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Die kirchenmusikalischen Bestimmungen ueber die Rezitation.

Von Präfekt E. Schmid, Chorallehrer am Priesterseminar Freising.

Wenn kirchenmusikalische Bestimmungen wie z. B. das *Caeremoniale episcoporum* oder ein neueres Dekret verlangen, dass bestimmte Texte wenigstens *rezitiert* werden, so schreiben sie damit zweierlei vor: *Orgelspiel* und *Aussprache des betreffenden Textes*. In den Fällen, für welche die Rezitation gestattet ist, wird nämlich das Orgelspiel als Vertretung des musikalischen Elementes angesehen; das sonst zu singende Offertorium z. B. fällt aus, und die Orgel ersetzt den Ausfall an Musik. Den Ausfall an Text aber kann sie nicht ersetzen; darum muss der betreffende Text während des zum Ersatz eintretenden Orgelspiels laut gesprochen werden. Dass dieser Text auf einem Ton gesungen, dass überhaupt ein bestimmter Rezitationston festgehalten werde, mit welchem die Orgel begleitend "ubereinstimmen" müsste, indem sie den betreffenden Ton umspielte, ist von den kirchlichen Bestimmungen *nirgends* gefordert. Diese letztere Art von Rezitation hat sich allerdings ziemlich allgemein eingebürgert, aber gefordert ist von der Kirche keineswegs ein Singen des Textes, sondern nur ein Sprechen diesselben ohne musikalische Verknüpfung mit dem Orgelspiel. Vielmehr ist die Verbindung zwischen dem Sprechen des Textes und dem Spielen der Orgel nach dem Wortlaut der kirchlichen Bestimmungen rein äusserlich zu denken, insoferne sie eben durch gleichzeitiges Erklingen ihre Zusammengehörigkeit bekunden.

Nur einige aus den vielen Belegen für die Richtigkeit dieser Auffassung seien angeführt. Orgelspiel wird beim Rezitieren für alle Fälle verlangt: "...dummodo organa non sileant" ...¹⁾ Das "Eintreten" der Orgel für sonst "suppleri organo"²⁾ — "Per organum figuratur aliquid cantari."³⁾ Wird aus irgend einem Grunde die Orgel nicht gespielt, dann kann auch von Rezitation nicht die Rede sein.⁴⁾

Der *Gesangtext* seinerseits darf nicht aus-

fallen, sondern muss während des gleichzeitigen Orgelspiels *laut und vernehmlich gesprochen* werden.⁵⁾ Bloss stilles Aussprechen des Textes ist nicht angängig.⁶⁾ Anderseits ist es *keineswegs* nötig, den Text auf einem Ton zu singen.

Das *Caer. ep. z. B.* fordert, dass "von einem aus dem Chor mit verständlicher Stimme ausgesprochen werde, was wegen des Orgelspiels nicht gesungen werde." (*Lib. I, cap. 28, n. 6*). Besonders deutlich ist ein nach Neapel gerichtetes Dekret vom 8. August 1906 (*D. a. 4189*). In der Anfrage an die heilige Ritenkongregation wird die bei uns übliche Rezitation auf einem Ton vorausgesetzt und eine Aeußerung erbeten, ob gewisse Gesänge "auf einem Ton mit Orgelbegleitung rezitiert werden" dürfen. Darauf antwortet die heilige Ritenkongregation nicht etwa mit einem kurzen "Ja" oder "Nein," sondern erklärt ausdrücklich, wie die Rezitation zu denken sei: "*Recitanda sunt voce alta et intelligibili, juxta mentem Caeremonialis episcoporum.*"

Der Geist der kirchlichen Bestimmungen über Rezitation lässt sich kurz in folgende Worte fassen: Der ausfallende Text soll den Teilnehmern an der betreffenden kirchlichen Feier zu Gehör gebracht, also laut gesprochen werden. Das gleichzeitig ertönende Orgelspiel unterscheidet dieses Sprechen von der Art und Weise, wie der gleiche Text z. B. in einem bloss gebeten Offizium oder einer stillen Messe (vom Priester) vorgetragen würde. Trägt man aber den Text auf einem Ton mit Orgelbegleitung vor, so leistet man mehr als die Kirche verlangt, man *singt* den Text, wenn auch in einfachster Weise, ebensogut wie der Zelebrant im Totenamt die Oration auf einem Tone "singt," nicht "rezitiert"; und doch singt der Zelebrant ohne Begleitung, während der Vortrag des Sängers auf einem Ton von der

¹⁾ *Caer. ep. I. I. cap. 28 n. 6*.—Die sog. *Verstellen* in der Orgelliteratur, die namentlich im 18. Jahrhundert viel geschrieben und gespielt wurden, lassen erkennen, wie man die Orgel bei dieser Rezitation zu behandeln habe. Gemeint sind damit die kurzen, meist 4—6, selten 11—13 Takte zählenden Verstellen, wie sie z. B. Albrechtsberger geschrieben hat.

²⁾ "Tractum integre canendum, cum organum non pulsatur" (*Decr. auth. 3108 ad 14*).

³⁾ "*Recitanda sunt voce alta et intelligibili*" (*Decr. auth. 4189 ad 1*).

⁴⁾ *Decr. auth. 4054 ad 9*.

¹⁾ *Decr. auth. 4067 ad 3*.

ge Musik wird oftmals mit eben diesem Ausdruck bezeichnet: "*supplire con l'organo*" —

²⁾ *Motu proprio* vom 22. November 1903, n. 8.

Orgel begleitet ist, also noch mehr Musik und "Gesang" genannt werden darf, wie der Orationsgesang des Priesters. *Die bei uns übliche "Rezitation" auf einem Tone ist demnach mehr als Rezitation im Sinne der Rubriken, sie ist Gesang.* Wenn also die Rubriken z. B. verbieten, dass vom Texte des *Credo* irgend etwas rezitiert werde, und das ganze *Credo* gesungen haben wollen, so folgt daraus noch kein Verbot der bei uns üblichen Rezitation. Tragen wir einige Sätze des *Credo* auf einem Tone mit Orgelbegleitung vor, so ist das ein *Gesang*, nicht eine Rezitation im Sinne der Dekrete; wir handeln also nicht gegen die kirchlichen Bestimmungen.

Gewissenhafte Kirchenmusiker empfinden es oft peinlich, dass das *Credo* "ganz gesungen" werden müsse. Sie werden die ausgesprochenen Gedanken als Erleichterung empfinden; denn wenn das Singen auf einem Tone mit Orgelbegleitung nicht verboten ist, werden sich viele praktische Bedenken beseitigen lassen. Damit ist zu erkennen gegeben, in welcher Absicht diese Zeilen geschrieben wurden: nicht etwa um der Bequemlichkeit des Kirchenmusikers vorzuarbeiten oder gar die Kraft der Rubriken abzuschwächen, sondern im Gegenteil, um zu freudiger und gewissenhafter Erfüllung der Rubriken anzueifern. Denn erkennt man, dass die Rubriken bezüglich der Rezitation weniger verlangen, als wohl mancher bisher meinte, dann wird er das Wenige desto eifriger erfüllen und nicht in das Extrem verfallen, dass er nun allzuviel auf einem Tone singen würde. Davor wird ihn der *musikalische Geschmack* und das *liturgische Feingefühl* bewahren. Der *musikalische Geschmack* wird ihn anleiten, zunächst überhaupt Mass zu halten in der Anwendung des eintönigen Gesanges, in den Fällen aber, in denen er davon Gebrauch macht, dies in würdiger Weise auszuführen.⁷⁾ Das *liturgische Feingefühl* wird sich an den Rubriken orientieren, auch da, wo sie nicht verbindend sind; z. B. wird man bei Auswahl der Sätze des *Gloria*, die auf einem Tone vorgetragen werden sollen, jedenfalls nicht gerade jene Stellen für den einstimmigen Gesang aussuchen, bei denen der Priester und die Diensttunden am Altar eine Ehrenbezeugung zu machen haben (*adoramus te usw.*). Kommt zum musikalischen Geschmack und zum liturgischen Feingefühl noch der fromme Sinn, dann und nur dann wird der Gesang jene Weihe erhalten, welche der kunstvollsten Kirchenmusik und der schlichtesten Rezitation ihren übernatürlichen Wert verleiht.

(*Musica sacra, Regensburg.*)

⁷⁾ Vgl. z. B. Johner, *Neue Schule des Choralgesanges*. 3. Aufl. S. 157 ff. No. 168 und 169, wo sich dankenswerte Winke für sorgfältige Rezitation finden.

A Word About New Hymnals.

BY VOX IN DESERTO.

There have been voiced recently some complaints about the increasing number of new English Catholic hymnals published in the United States. After giving vent to his feelings in the matter, one writer suggests, in a certain magazine, the adoption of one official hymnal for the United States as a remedy for what he considers to be a growing evil. We cannot take his view either as to the evil or as to the remedy. To our mind, and as we shall presently show, the multiplication of good new English hymnals is not an evil. And as for the remedy he suggests, we are inclined to think that, with our present cosmopolitan population, with the prevailing confusion and corruption of taste, and with the widespread preference for hymns à la Sankey and worse, the hymnodic millennium, when there will be one universally adopted official hymnal in the United States, is still some 200 years distant, to say the least. But we do not wish to be understood as preaching the doctrine of an inglorious submission and surrender to the evil that really besets us. We honestly deplore the steady increase in the number of *bad* new hymnals. The flood is upon us. Is it possible to set a barrier to its threatened encroachment? If so, then let us by all means set to work in a practical way to stem the tide as far as this is possible. And let us cease clamoring for a Moses to work a miracle.

The devil is never so much of a devil as when he simulates the saint. We have in mind here the abortive crop of English hymnals that has come into existence since certain people were more scared than hurt by the bombshell known as the *Motu Proprio*. Now with reference to these hymnals the writer contends, on the strength of an extended experience, that they could not have spread as they did, had they not been hypocritically visaged with a sanctimonious "ecclesiastical correctness." Almost without exception they claim to be "*according to the Motu Proprio*." Oh, for some mighty arm to avenge this insulting reflection on the mind of the august author of the *Motu Proprio*!

Those who have traveled about the country and have had an eye for what is going on in the sphere of church music, know and admit that there was in many places a gratifying response to the appeal of the *Motu Proprio*; at least there was the response of a good will. In many quarters there was a disposition "to do the right thing," to break with such abominations as St. Basil's Hymnal et id genus infandum omne. But this good faith and good will was abused, preyed upon, exploited,—

with what success, the well-stocked coffers of some publishers can eloquently tell.

The writer has it upon reliable authority that the first 25,000 copies of a certain new English hymnal—one of the worst of the mis-carried products of which he speaks—were disposed of like hot cakes. And why not? A great publisher gave the book first-class advertising; advance literature was sent to all the churches and convents in the land; the "virtues" of the book, notably its "conformity" to the *Motu Proprio* (whatever that meant), were, to all appearances, convincingly set forth; the book had had a pedagogical (!) birth, its contents being carefully (!) graded to meet the needs of our parochial schools especially in the matter of introducing the Gregorian chant; and there was more of this dexterously contrived commercial clap-trap. Then, too, the book got an early start, got ahead of the others, "beat them to it," so to speak. And, finally, was there not, black on white, in all its calligraphic conspicuousness, the autograph Imprimatur of the authority to whom the author of the hymnal owned spiritual allegiance and to whom, to use the author's words, the book owed its "inspiration?" Was there even one of the many well-meaning persons who saw these credentials, that suspected or dared to suspect *salva reverentia*, that there was anything wrong with that hymnal? And so, why should those first 25,000 copies not have sold like hot cakes? Alas! the people "asked for bread" and were given "a stone." Indeed, that fake label, "*according to the Motu Proprio*," has found and is still finding its dupes. It works like a charm commercially.

Are we going to blame the dupes? Or shall we help them, warn them, inform them? Will they believe us? Will they accept our credentials? What chance has an honest lightning-rod agent who happens along after the farmer has been "stung?" "*Stung*" is the word that has re-echoed for some time past in many a convent and parish house. "*Stung*" by the Crown Hymnal. "*stung*" by the revised (!?) St. Basil's Hymnal. "*stung*" by the De La Salle (revised! ? Christian Brothers') Hymnal. "*stung*" by the American Catholic (Marist Brothers') Hymnal,—thus it rings out bitterly and is wafted to and fro in the lugubrious chorus of disappointed purchasers. And let it be known that the word "*stung*" connotes here not merely a jolt given the esthetic sense, not merely a depression of the mind, but also, and very emphatically, a depression of the purse. Some of those books are priced \$1.50, you know.

Despite his reputation for being a "Missourian" in this very matter of new hymnals, the writer confesses with some humiliation and

much indignation, that he, too, was caught and "*stung*" in the manner aforementioned. Not in excuse, but in explanation—this it is hoped is a distinction with a difference—he pleads the following: Though there was a bad taste left in his mouth after an experience with the earlier products of certain Religious (the capital *R* is both denotative and deferential) hymnal factories, the writer was charitably disposed to trust the new label on the new brands as indicating that the "reformed" products of these factories in very truth conformed to the requirements of the ecclesiastical pure food law known as the *Motu Proprio*. What right had he as a good Christian to question the honesty of a *pater peccavi* that came from such sources? How could he in charity have continued in his Nathanielian attitude to ask: "Can anything of good come from Nazareth?"

Then, too, the writer was misled by a leading—note the paradox!—organ of church information. Unfortunately, he took the printed word of the musical critic of the American Ecclesiastical Review for what he thought it was worth and for what it should have been worth and not alas! for what it was actually worth. On this latter point nothing more shall be said here, since the culpability of incompetent and conniving reviewers of church music may serve as a separate theme for more extended reflections elsewhere.

Now we have had a glimpse of the way in which the crop of bad hymnals is spreading and doing its mischief. It remains to be seen how the evil is to be counteracted. We have already made it clear that we consider the prospect of having in the United States one official, universally adopted hymnal to be a pious dream. For reasons already stated, it is nothing more than that.

Now what about the good hymnals? Thank God, they are multiplying. There are now, we think, some four or five of them. Some people are alarmed at their growing number. We repeat, that we do not share this view. If the publishers of our good hymnals were as alive and enterprising in their advertising methods as the publisher who got rid of the first 25,000 copies of his misfit hymnal in jig-time, we should, indeed, think that the good hymnals we now have were sufficient to serve the purpose. What purpose? To stem the tide of bad hymnals, of course. But as things are now, the only way in which to meet that flood effectively is to start a counter-flood of good new hymnals. For every bad new hymnal that raises its malformed and mischievous head, a good hymnal ought to be put on the market. The writer has had an excellent opportunity for a number of years of informing himself as to

the circulation of the various hymnals over a wide territory of this country. The bad hymnals have won out largely because of better advertising. Their spread was not handicapped by an economy in one-cent postage. It only takes a one-cent postage stamp, you know, to send an attractive circular into corners and localities that an occasional magazine ad or an obscure book review will never reach. And doesn't it seem strange, by the way, that some publishers hold back their advertising leaflets and circulars until they can send out a bill at the same time? The psychological aspect of this procedure has always interested us immensely.

And let no one tell us that there is no room for more hymnals even where new hymnals of good quality have already been introduced. The good Sisters in their convents are notoriously insatiable in their clamor for more hymns and hymnals.

So then, all you budding authors and compilers of good English hymnals, out with your books! Don't be bashful if you have "something up your sleeve." Don't let any complaints about "too many hymnals" and the like intimidate or deter you. Get a live publisher, one who has some "push" and who isn't chary with one-cent stamps. But please do not send your hymnal on its way equipped with that blinding headlight, "*according to the Motu Proprio.*" Rather be prepared by the quality of your work to have the searchlight operated by other hands and from the opposite direction. And then please, too, refrain from dedicating your work to the memory of His Holiness, Pius X. Let that good Pontiff rest in peace, a thing he richly deserves after having borne with heroic patience and fortitude a depressing load of variegated, albeit deferential musical opus offerings during his life-time. As for the rest, we of the purchasing class promise to do our part. Give us more hymnals of the quality of Bonvin's *Hosanna*, Singenberger's *Cantata*, and, we are very glad to say, Otten's *Parish Hymnal* of recent date. Through the instrumentality of these sinewy little Davids the writer is proud to own he has slain inflated Goliaths à la St. Basil's Hymnal by the hundreds actually in the past and, so he firmly believes, by the thousands potentially in the future.

New Publications. Organ Accompaniment to Parish Hymnal.

By PROF. JOS. OTTEN.

Organ accompaniment to his Parish Hymnal is on the whole a good and commendable

work. Every organist, even those of medium attainments, will find it both handy and instructive. Most of the Gregorian chants contained therein favor the strict style of organ accompaniment, i. e., the accompaniment employs no notes foreign to the tonality of the church mode; a few, however, Nos. 43 and 104, will make the organist acquainted with the freer style of organ setting. Yet while I recommend the work to our organists, I consider it my duty to call the attention of the author to a few *pia desideria* which might find fulfillment in a later edition of the work:

(1) Braces have been employed in some hymns to indicate what notes of the tenor part can be reached with the right hand. This should be done in all hymns, because the majority of organists have only a reed organ at their disposal.

(2) Ties should be used more profusely in the Alto, Tenor, and Bass parts in order to facilitate a Legato performance. Compare for correct tying Nos. 22 and 31.

(3) Misprints of the first edition should be corrected. There are not very many, and most of them will be readily noticed and corrected. I call attention to only one in No. 99, where text and notation do not agree.

(4) The setting of No. 47 is suited to performance by a mixed choir, and No. 48 should be performed by four equal voices. While the former may pass for congregational singing, the latter is entirely unfit for a unisono performance.

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C. BECKER.

BERICHT.

Von den vielen Berichten über die kirchenmusikalischen Leistungen am hl. Weihnachtsfeste möge hier als der besonderen Erwähnung wert derjenige von der St. Peter's-Kirche in Fort Wayne (Rev. Ch. H. Thiele) Platz finden. Der unter Leitung von Mr. H. Wiegand stehende Chor (Knaben und Männer) sang zum Hochamte Introit, Graduale und Communio Choral nach der Vatikanischen Ausgabe; Offertorium von Dr. Fr. Witt; Kyrie, Benedictus und Agnus Dei aus Missa purissimi Cordis B. Mariae V.; Gloria und Sanctus aus der sechsstimmigen Missa Papae Marcelli, von G. Palestrina, Credo von J. Gruber; nach dem Hochamte sang die Gemeinde das "Adeste fideles"; Vesper-Choral, zum hl. Segen: O salutaris von M. Haller; Tantum ergo von Dr. Fr. Witt.

